

GOD THE WONDER-WORKER

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**A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

*“To Him who alone does great wonders: for His mercy endures forever.”
Psalm 136:4.*

BELOVED, when we get into God's world of wonders, we have range enough. Which way shall I turn? On what subject shall I speak? If I turn to nature, it teems with wonders. Altering a little the language of Coleridge I would say, “All true science begins with wonder, and ends with wonder, and the space between is filled up with admiration.” If we turn to Providence, the history of the nations, the history of the church, what centuries of wonders pass before us! It is said that wise men only wonder once, and that is always, fools never wonder, because they are fools. The story of the church is a constellation of miracles. I cannot venture upon themes so vast as Creation and Providence. Shall we turn to the works of grace, the wonders of Redemption? If we consider the glory of grace surrounding the cross, which is the wonder of wonders, we are upon a boundless ocean. Here is sea-room indeed, we are at no loss for a subject, but we are lost in the subject. Now are we where the height, and depth, and length, and breadth are each immeasurable. It was said of Dr. Barrow that he was an unfair preacher, because he exhausted every subject he touched, and left nothing for anyone else to say. I would like Dr. Barrow to try my text, and I am sure for once he would have to vary his style. He would only be able to suggest to us what might be said by ten thousand preachers all occupied ten thousand years upon this one theme.

“To Him who alone does great wonders: for His mercy endures forever.” I feel inclined to bow the knee instead of opening the mouth and to ask you rather to meditate in the silence of your hearts than to listen to my scanty speech. Happily, the text assists me, for it suggests that I narrow my theme to the consideration of wonders of mercy, and that I then narrow it again to present wonders of mercy, for the text is in the present tense—“To Him who alone *does* great wonders,” that is to say, is doing them now. Only, then, of marvels of mercy shall I speak at this time, and I shall endeavor, as far as possible, to direct your thoughts to present wonders of mercy. I say, as far as possible, for it must necessarily be that we link with the present both the past and the future, because they are all of one, for God lives in all the tenses at once.

I. Our first head shall be this—GOD IS WORKING WONDERS OF MERCY NOW. “To Him who alone *does* great wonders: for His mercy endures forever.” It is enduring now, and is in the present tense forever.

Wonders are things out of the common, unusual things, extraordinary things. Usually they are unexpected; we wonder at them partly because they are novel and surprising. They take us aback; they are things which we looked not for. When they come they astonish us, and put us both in a muse and in a maze. We look, and look, and look, and cannot believe our eyes; we hear, and hear, and scarcely believe our ears. Great wonders, even when we grow accustomed to them, still continue to excite admiration, and frequently they cause us to praise the worker of them, as it is written, “Sing unto the Lord; for He has done marvelous things.”

I believe that today God is doing great wonders in saving great sinners. It is a wonder that God should touch a sinner at all, yes, that He should even look at him. A sinner is such an evil thing, his sin is so vile, so foul, that holiness cannot take any pleasure in him. He who fails to obey his Maker is creation's blank, creation's blot, and it is a wonder that his Creator should think of him with patience. But that God should call the sinner with the voice of love, and bid him return and find favor is a wonder. That when he does not return at the gracious bidding the Lord should draw him with bands of love is

more wonderful still! The Lord takes more trouble with a sinner than it cost Him to make a world; He could complete the globe in six days, but it often takes many years to bring a sinner to repentance, and to perfect his salvation. The abounding of divine wisdom, and prudence, and long-suffering, and patience are needed to work salvation. The Lord, travailing with compassion goes about to compass the salvation of the greatly erring one. He is still doing great wonders in changing depraved natures, breaking hard hearts, subduing obstinate wills, enlightening darkened judgments, and winning rebellious minds. Spiritual miracles Jesus is working still, and of this fact many of us are instances in our own persons, and also eyewitnesses of the like wonders worked on others. Blessed be God; we still see with wonder sinners saved by the marvelous grace of God. The riches of His mercy are still displayed in the salvation of the lost.

Nor less may the wonders of the Lord be seen in the preservation of those who believe on His name. A true believer's life is a mystery to himself and to others. Concerning the wind, you cannot tell from where it comes, or where it goes, "so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." We are men wondered at. Do you not wonder, my brother, that you are still a Christian? Faith is so contrary to nature that its existence in the heart is like a spark burning in the sea. Faith is so much attacked, especially in this evil day, that, it is like a candle kept alight in a cyclone. Yet you have not drawn back unto perdition! Still, though faint, you are pursuing. Truly if you had been mindful of the country from which you came out, you would have had many opportunities to return. Satan's chariots and his horses have waited upon you with many invitations to ride back into the land of your former slavery if you had a mind to go. Alas! The evil heart of unbelief has lusted for the leeks and garlic and onions many a time. Kept alive with death so near; you are a standing wonder to yourself. What great things the Lord has done for you! How He has led you, instructed you, helped you, comforted you! All these as I mention them will wake up many admiring memories, and cause you to cry, "The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

To me, also, it is a great wonder that God should use any of us; we seem so unfit for His holy purposes. Can He write with such a pen as I am upon the fleshy tablets of men's hearts? What! Can He paint a fair picture of holiness in the characters of my hearers with so poor a brush as I am? Then indeed He does great wonders. That which God does by our instrumentality at any time, if, indeed, it is for His glory, should fill us with astonishment. When Saul, who formerly persecuted the saints, saw saints made under his ministry, he was drawn out in wondering adoration as he wrote, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given."

The Lord God does wonders still by maintaining His church and the cause of truth in the midst of the world. Read through history, and you meet with periods when the light seemed quenched, but then suddenly it burned with superior luster. Remember the Reformation, and the revival of the last century. When spiritual life seemed almost extinct, there came times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. It will be the same at this dark hour. All the devils in hell can never quench the light of truth. They may do all they can in union with all the wise men of the world to put down the old gospel of the cross, but even though they should slay it and bury it, it would rise again. When the voices which have been lifted up against the gospel shall have been silenced forever, the Word of the Lord shall sound forth to the ends of the earth. God is still doing great wonders in the maintenance of His despised gospel, and in the keeping alive of those spiritual doctrines which the carnal mind hates as much today as it ever did.

Now, dear brethren, why may we expect the Lord to still do wonders? I answer, first, because *His word raises our expectations*. Surely the Lord will not cease to work wonders, and descend to the commonplace; for this Book, talks of great things and marvelous things. Does He not say concerning His great grace, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts"? Have we not many passages of Scripture which run in this wise—"Though your sins are as scarlet they shall be as white as snow"? The universe is challenged by the question, "Who is a God like unto You, that pardons iniquity, and passes by the transgression of the remnant of His heritage?" Hear our Lord speak and invite the laboring and heavy laden to His rest. Hear Him declare that "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." Hear how His apostles declare that "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin." Paul, that chief of sinners, sets himself forth as the type and pattern according to which God will work in the after ages. This inspired Book does not promise us small things. It is not pitched in a low key. Concerning the multitudes that

will be saved in the latter days, it speaks in grand terms, saying, "Nations that knew not You shall run unto You." We have so much to this effect that I will not stay to quote the passages, only of this we are sure, that one day we shall hear the glorious shout, "Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigns." Anyone who is familiar with Holy Scripture will expect that God will continue to work wonders in the realm of grace.

But, beloved, we have something more than words. *God has evidently made preparations for doing great things.* When He made the covenant of grace to be the very soul and center of all His acts, when He put it first, and last, and midst, He did not intend little things. Jehovah does not swear by Himself about trifles, nor lift His hand to heaven concerning small matters. The very existence of the everlasting covenant is the sure prophecy of grace on a grand scale, grace magnified to the astonishment of all intelligent beings. When the glorious Son of the Highest came from heaven, and veiled His Godhead in human flesh, He had designs of a majestic character. An incarnate God forebodes great grace to our humanity. And when as God and man, in one person, our Lord Jesus suffered shame, and spitting, and scourging, and condemnation, and bowed Himself at last to death, the result of all His passion cannot mean the salvation of a few, or a questionable salvation for many. It must foretell a sure salvation for a multitude of great sinners. Stupendous guilt is intended to be washed away by the blood of so divine a sacrifice. If our Lord Jesus Christ is to receive a reward commensurate with His accomplished work, we may safely look for things which shall amaze the world. Such a feast as I see spread within the royal halls of grace is not intended for a handful of guests. When oxen and fatlings are killed, to provide such abundant meat the host must have an eye to vast numbers of guests of voracious appetite. The provision of grace in Christ Jesus is so abundant that it must be meant for a wonderful assembly of needy souls. Come you, and try the freeness and fullness of Christ, and see if you are refused.

Furthermore, when I reflect that the Holy Spirit has come down from heaven, and that He has never left us, but abides with His church to carry out the purposes of grace by convincing men of sin, and glorifying Christ, I am encouraged to look for great things. The Holy Spirit is not here in vain. He intends to do great things. If the biggest blasphemer out of hell were reported to be saved today, I should not find it difficult to believe the news. If, in this house, there should be one who has denied the Deity of our Lord, and has cast off all fear of God, and consequently has plunged into the worst forms of sin, I can readily hope that the Lord may pass by all his transgressions, and make him one of His most earnest servants. It would be a wonder, it may seem to be an impossibility, but this is no reason why it should not be done. God has made preparation for producing this kind of wonder. Faith is led confidently to expect what reason would never suggest.

When I see, in addition to the covenant, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, all the preparations of the Lord's effectual power for the coming of the Lord, for His glorious reign upon the earth, and for the eternal glorification of the redeemed, I am assured in my own soul that the Lord is working upon a wonderful scale, whether we see it or not. Between now and the consummation of all things, wonders are to be common. The pathway of grace shall blaze with splendor. I invite you to enlarge your hope concerning Him who alone "does great wonders: for His mercy endures forever."

Dear friends, we are not left to promises and preparations. *Our faith is continually refreshed by new facts.* I have the great happiness of frequently seeing very extraordinary instances of God's grace among sinful men. I will not relate even one of them, but my memory is stored with them. Often my eyes are filled with tears when I grip the hand of a convert who but a little while ago was a blasphemer and injurious, a Sabbath breaker, a drunkard, and sunk in every form of uncleanness. When I see such a man converted, renewed and made holy, because the Lord has met with him and revealed Himself to him through the preaching of the word, my eyes are filled with tears of wondering joy. When I find that such a poor testimony as I am able to bear is made by God's grace effectual to work a total change of nature, I am overwhelmed with wondering and grateful emotions. To see the Lord lift wretches from the dung-hill and set them among the princes of His people causes us to hold up our hands in joyful astonishment, and ascribe all praise "To Him who alone does great wonders: for His mercy endures forever."

The joy is that you and I assembled here this morning either are, or may be, personal instances of the wonder-working power of God. O my hearer, if you will now in your great sin accept great mercy, you may have it! If you will come with all your evil habits binding you, and ask to be set free from them, the great Redeemer will break those manacles from your wrists, and give you a glorious liberty. Is

not our Lord named Jesus because He shall save His people from their sins? If you are the greatest sinner out of the bottomless pit, if you will look to Christ upon the cross, and trust in Him alone, you shall be born again, you shall pass from death unto life, and your many sins shall be forgiven you. Some of us are always wondering why the Lord loved us, why He bought us, why He sought us, and why He continues to acknowledge us and our heart's desire is that all of you who come to this house of prayer may become similar wonders of divine grace. The Lord grant that the wonders may begin this morning. We are assured that among us upon whom the ends of the earth have come, "the Lord does great wonders." Did I hear anyone say, "Truly, if I were converted it would be a wonder"? Yes, you are excellent raw material for God to work upon in the creation of a wonder. Did I hear another say, "A person is here this morning that, if he were saved, would be a wonder, indeed"? Pray for him, then. Pray at once, distinctly, for him, in the glad hope that he will be another wonder. The God of infinite mercy looks out for room for His grace to work in, and space for almighty love to display its power. Your necessity, feebleness, and emptiness, are the space in which infinite mercy finds elbowroom for its energy. He "who alone does great wonders," looks for the greatly guilty and the greatly needy, that in them He may reveal His grace. Oh, that my heart was enlarged, and my mouth was opened fitly, to encourage you who think you are beyond the bounds of divine mercy! Oh, think not that the grace of God can never come to you! The Lord delights in mercy. He loves to do that which is unexpected by the heart of man. He delights in surprising men with His grace, and getting to Himself renown by His love. He will, for His own name's sake, do great wonders of mercy. Because no reason can be found in men themselves, the Lord resolves to find it in Himself, and therefore He lavishes His grace that His glory may be wondered at, both in heaven and in earth.

II. I pass on to another phase of the same thought, for upon this one thought I mean to harp at this time, so that this one note shall linger in your ears for many a day. Our first head has been that God is working wonders of mercy; our second point is that THESE WONDERS ARE STILL GREAT, "To Him who alone does *great* wonders."

We have heard of wonders that were not great, for they were not even true. The magicians of Egypt withstood Moses with their enchantments, and false prophets have much relied upon tricks and deceptions. Antichrist to this day is prone to use lying wonders. But God's wonders are real, they are truly wonderful, and are not mere pretences. Neither nature, nor providence, nor grace lends any countenance to mere outside appearance; the deeper you go in God's wonders, the more wonderful they are. That which the Lord does is peculiarly, His own. Even as the magicians said, "This is the finger of God," and ceased from their conjuring. They had touched upon the inimitable, and were forced to pause.

Many apparent wonders can be explained, and henceforth, the wonder is gone. Certain nations wonder at an eclipse, which to the astronomer is a very simple affair. Now, you cannot explain away election, redemption, regeneration, and the pardon of sin; these great wonders of almighty love are all the greater the more you know of them. Many wonders, also, are diminished by familiarity. Well do I remember as a child being taken to see the first train drawn by a steam engine to our town; I greatly wondered, but I have now ceased to wonder at such an ordinary sight. I remember a viaduct, which to my juvenile mind was stupendous; I have seen it since, and it is by no means one of the wonders of the world. The wonders of grace are such that the more you see them the more your wonder grows. In these cases it is ignorance which does *not* wonder, but knowledge marvels exceedingly. Those who are most familiar with the Lord think the most of Him and of His grace. The wonders of divine grace are so great that they can never be eclipsed by any greater marvels. No one will ever tell us a more marvelous story than the life and death of our Lord for sinful men. In the gift of Jesus Christ the infinite God has outdone all His previous acts. This is the greatest wonder that angels ever heard of; they desire still to look into it. This is in words and sense, the climax of all miracles—"God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." When you and I have, for millions and millions of years, realized what divine mercy means, my conviction is that we shall wonder more at the Lord's grace than we do now. Salvation is an exceedingly *great* wonder, like the great mountains, or the great sea. The lovingkindness of the Lord is immeasurable. "Now," cries someone, "you speak about wonders; if I were to be converted it would not only be a wonder, but a *great* wonder." That is why I expect it, for the Lord still takes pleasure in performing great wonders! "Oh, but I am such a devil in sin! I have gone to the brink of hell. It is impossible that I should be for-

given.” That is why I expect to see such pardons given. Unconquerable mercy will, I trust, take up the challenge of your sin. The Lord is at home with great things. You and I are often overbalanced with small affairs, but the Lord’s element is greatness. See Him making worlds, striking them off like sparks from the anvil of His creating power! Miracles are commonplace with God. His is essential and unrivalled greatness. “The nations are as a drop of a bucket: He takes up the isles as a very little thing.” The Lord grants great forgiveness to great sinners, and takes pleasure to work great transformations in those who were soaked through and through with sin.

Why does God work great wonders of grace? I answer, *because He is great and greatly wonderful*. He acts according to His nature when He does great wonders. He is so wonderful a God that no one has ever formed an adequate conception of Him. We do not understand God, nor can we comprehend Him. We know that there is such a one and we love and praise Him, but to say that we understand God as a man is understood by his fellow, would be very far from the truth. Ten thousand minds, educated to the highest, and even filled with the Holy Spirit, if they could unite their largest ideas, could not compass the infinite Jehovah. You have filled so many little cups with the waters of the sea, but you are as far off as ever from having taken up the great deep. It is but natural that the Infinite One should do great wonders. The Lord is inconceivably great, and therefore we are unable to imagine a limit to what He may do in a direction so much His own as that of mercy, since God is love. Assuredly, to be great in everything is after the manner of the great Lord; He does greatly pardon, greatly renew, greatly love, greatly bless, greatly glorify. Oh, that we would believe Him to be great, then should we with Mary sing, “My soul does magnify the Lord, and my spirit does rejoice in God my Savior.”

Do not despondingly imagine that God will allow His wonders to dwindle down as the world grows old. “Oh,” you say, “He did great wonders in the olden times, but He is not of that mind now.” Is that your God? My God is the same; He faints not, neither is weary. He still does great wonders. Jehovah who divided the Red Sea is our God forever and ever; He could divide the Atlantic if He willed it, and would do so if it were needful for the fulfillment of His gracious purposes. The God who fed His people in the wilderness may not cause manna to fall from heaven today, but He will none the less give food unto His people. “Your place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; your bread shall be given you, and your waters shall be sure.” The Lord can do as much today as He did in the elder ages; yes, we may look for greater things than these. I do not believe that God’s music is now marked with *diminuendo*, but I see *crescendo* on the score; it grows in volume and in force as the ages roll along. The Lord leads our wondering minds on from height to height, and reveals to us more and more the glory of His power.

This leads me to believe that *the Lord Jesus will yet save greater sinners than He ever did save*, if such sinners there be. Our Lord celebrated His entrance into Paradise by the salvation of a thief, and soon after His resurrection He restored Peter. He will always be saving thieves, and restoring backsliders. He went after Saul of Tarsus, who was both a persecutor and a blasphemer, and He means always to be saving sinners of that kind. That Philippian jailer, converted at the dead of night, is but a specimen of the sort of hard, rough, cruel brutes that He will still subdue by His mighty grace. The Lord will go on to save great sinners, for He has put His hand to the plow of grace and He will not look back—

*“Jesus reigns on Zion’s hill,
He receives poor sinners still.”*

The most guilty and most hardened, and most daring of rebels are welcome to come to Jesus and look to Him and live. How pleased I am to preach this gospel! Oh, that I could preach it better! I expect the Lord to go on saving great sinners by these words of mine, and this shall be to the praise of the glory of His grace.

We may expect the Lord to forgive great sins, such as murders, adulteries, robberies, blasphemies and sins unmentionable. Mercy gets to itself renown when it annihilates giant sins; then we sing of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, overthrown by the Lord, whose mercy endures forever. His mercy is not an atom less than it used to be, for it endures forever. The ocean of today is as full as when Jonah went down into its deeps; the sun of today is as bright as when it shone on Lot entering Zoar, and the grace of God is as full, as broad, as deep, as omnipotent, as when our Savior dwelt among men, and said to one and another, “Your sins are forgiven you.”

The Lord is also doing great wonders in displaying great condescensions to those who believe on His Son Jesus Christ. It would be a great wonder if the Lord should meet with *us* today and make our

hearts leap for joy; but, unworthy as we are, He is ready to do so. It would be a great wonder if He were to restore our backslidings, and heal the bones which are broken by our sins, but He waits to act as our soul's surgeon. It would be a great wonder if He was to enter in and sup with us, and we with Him, but He even now knocks at the door of our hearts with that design. The Lord's bosom may still be leaned upon; we may still lean on our Beloved; He will still kiss us with the kisses of His mouth. The Lord still dwells with the humble and contrite, for this great wonder of condescension still delights Him.

The Lord is working great wonders of delivering grace. Are any of you in great trouble or great danger? The Lord that delivered David out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paws of the bear, and from the hand of the uncircumcised Philistine, will deliver you also with a great deliverance. He that saved Daniel in the den of lions, and brought him out unharmed, even He that walked with the holy children in the burning fiery furnace, is the same God still. He can, He will, He does deliver. You shall see His great wonders if you will but trust in Him. You that are tossed about and sorely pained with the present state of the Church of God, you may look for wonders of grace. I expect our Lord to do great wonders at this time by sending us great revivals of religion, or in some other way making bare His holy arm. What shall withstand Him if He does but awake Himself! In former ages the light has burned very low, and then the Lord has trimmed the lamp. The Lord has spoken, and great has been the multitudes of them that have published His word. Then "kings of armies did flee; and she that tarried at home divided the spoil." It shall be so still. Oh, You that do great wonders, fight for Yourself this day, and make the adversaries of Your truth melt away. Let us pray for the visitations of the Holy Spirit, but never let us give way to doubt, even for a moment. "Therefore will not we fear, though the earth is removed, and though the mountains are carried into the midst of the sea. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." Now we have got some good way into our text—"To Him that does great wonders" be glory forever and ever.

III. The third point is this—THESE GREAT WONDERS ARE WORKED BY GOD ALONE. He *alone* does great wonders. Lay emphasis heavily upon the word "alone."

My brethren, there are deeds of kindness which you could not expect anyone else to do. The most forgiving of human spirits can never pardon as God does. You, poor sinner, have been measuring God's corn with your bushel, and therefore you conclude that He cannot forgive you, but His long-suffering and grace are greater than yours. If you had offended others as you have offended God, you might safely come to the conclusion that forgiveness would be out of the question, but the Lord in mercy far outruns all others. None can forgive and forget as the Lord does. It was never heard of, that one could pass over such offenses and rebellions as God does freely blot out. The Lord can do, and is daily doing, such acts of love and mercy as would be looked for in vain among men and angels. Believe that God is more able to forgive than you are able to believe. Have you written it down among your sadly sure conclusions that you are certain to be lost? The God of All grace delights to contradict our despairs. He will disannul your covenant with death, and deliver the lawful captive from the hand of the destroyer. He will interpose in an unheard-of manner. He says, "Behold, I will do a new thing." He will do that which we looked not for, and thus make us own that He alone does great wonders. God's grace is unique. To whom will you liken Him? In this He is seen to be God alone. None can approach Him, so as to be mentioned in the same day. He does for us exceedingly abundantly above what we ask or even think. Ah, poor desponding soul! You had a dream. Did you not dream that you were a child again, and could begin life once more? You woke up and cried, "Ah me! This will never be true. I wish it were." It can be true. The Lord can make you to become a little child again by being born again. It is hard, I know, for you to believe it, but nothing ought to be hard to believe concerning the God whose mercy endures forever. He alone, Himself, and by Himself, can perform prodigies of love.

When it is said that He does these great wonders "alone," it means that He does them when nobody can help Him. My friend, you cannot do anything; you are now reduced to utter impotence, under a sense of sin. You fear that you cannot even believe, or feel, but the Lord is all-sufficient, and He alone does great wonders. He can do all for you, and work all in you. What strange creatures we are! We feel that we must try to help God. What folly is this! O poor creature of a day, did you help Him to make the world? Where were you when the mountains were brought forth? O feeble creature what can you do? Can you help Him in providence? He asks no aid from you. I have known some poor souls complain that they cannot feel their nothingness, and they fancy that if they felt their nothingness, Christ could then

save them. This is odd, is it not? Here is a man who must necessarily help God by his nothingness! Out of the way with you! You do but block the road! Stand aside, and let grace work! What can you do? Do you reply, "I must believe and repent?" I know you must, but—

*"True belief, and true repentance,
Every grace that brings us nigh,
Without money,
Come to Jesus Christ and buy."*

Jesus Christ comes to save you just as you are, and His salvation comes to you where you are. When they make railways in England they usually carry them sufficiently far from a town to give work to an omnibus. Seldom does the station stand near the house where one wants to go. The railway to heaven is of another sort; it comes to your door. Jesus comes where you are, and meets your actual condition. Though you lie at death's door, Christ comes as the resurrection and the life. Though you pine in the vestibule of hell, almighty mercy comes to free you from condemnation. In your spiritual helplessness and hopelessness, Jesus comes to you, saying, "Trust Me now to be all in all to you." Praise Him who alone, without your puny aid, or the aid of a priest, or the aid of mortifications and penances, can remove your sins, and make you pure and holy. His own arm brings salvation to those who trust Him, and He alone does great wonders.

When the Lord uses means in the salvation of a soul, He takes care that nobody shall praise the means or ascribe the salvation to the agent. He has many ways with His most useful servants of making them keep their places, and you will notice that as soon as ever any one of them begins to grow rather large in his own esteem, he is usually met with weakness and barrenness. We must, brethren, keep self out of the way. We must put ourselves absolutely into God's hands, that He may use us in the winning of souls, and then we must send the great *I* down, down, down, till it is buried out of all remembrance. They tell us that when you go fishing it is wise to stand back and keep yourself out of sight as much as possible. The fish that see *you* will not take the bait. The Lord will not do great wonders in company, but alone. His servants must not set up to be masters, or they will be sternly rebuked. On the throne of grace, God will brook no rival. If we are to see Jesus increase we must decrease. If Christ goes up, self goes down. The Lord says, "My glory will I not give to another." We shall be made to forget the minister, and every other worker, and recognize the fact that the Lord alone does great wonders.

O brethren, when I think of what the Lord has done for some of us by forgiving and saving us, how His glorious name rises and fills the whole heaven! God is not to be compared with any; they vanish as He appears. The Father is everything; He alone does great wonders when He receives the returning prodigal. The Son of God who bore our sins in His own body on the tree is everything to us, and He alone is The Wonderful. When we shall see Him it will be as the Lamb in the midst of the throne. We shall give no praise for our salvation to any, but Himself and that divine Spirit who regenerates us. Beloved, we rely on no influences of any sort save that almighty influence which proceeds from the Holy Spirit. "He alone does great wonders."

This should be a great comfort to those of you who are not yet saved. If I were in your condition I would try to catch at the text this morning. God Himself is able to save. Trust Jesus and live.

Here also is comfort for children of God who are exercised concerning the state of the churches. Be encouraged, for the Lord who alone does great wonders is equal to the emergency. Perhaps He will strip us still more; perhaps He will take away every able man that now preaches the gospel, and when our Calvins and Luthers and Zwinglies are all dead, then, maybe, He alone will do great wonders. Be it so, if so it pleases Him, for He must have all the glory. The extremity of the church shall be the opportunity of God. But man of God rest you sure that His everlasting purposes will stand, and His divine covenant of mercy will endure forever.

IV. I close with my last head—upon which I will speak briefly. Beloved, if you know anything about these wonders, these great wonders, these wonders in which God stands alone, then remember that **FOR THESE WONDERS HE IS TO BE PRAISED**. This verse is an ascription of praise. "To Him who alone does great wonders: for His mercy endures forever." It means—to Him be thanks and praise and power and honor and majesty forever and ever. Oh, that we could fill the universe with praise!

Wonder is a sort of praise; it is the chaos out of which a world of praise is to be made. Sit you still and silently meditate on the greatness and goodness of God until you are overcome with admiration, and

then you will adore. Our wonderment should always blossom into thanks. Holy wonder is like sweet incense, but love must set it on a blaze with a burning coal of gratitude. “O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good: for His mercy endures forever.”

If you will begin to praise the Lord for His great wonders of mercy, I will tell you what will happen to you. First, we shall find *His nature revealed to us*. “O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.” We shall begin to see the essential goodness of God, and then we shall the better understand the manifestations of it as seen in ten thousand ways. This is something to learn. We learn through the habit of praise to know in a measure what God is.

Next, while praising Him for His wonders, you will learn to *adore His Godhead*. “Give thanks unto the God of gods.” It is a grand thing to be deeply impressed that God is God. Has He not said, “Be still and know that I am God”? We do not know what God is, but we know that He is God; we cannot comprehend Him, but we apprehend this much—that He is God. It is the greatest thought a man can ever think when He thinks that God is God. I would have you praise Him until you know that He is God, for you will treat Him as He should be treated when you distinctly recognize the glory of His Deity.

If you will keep on praising Him for His wonders, you will come to *know somewhat of His sovereignty*. “O give thanks unto the Lord of lords,” for He rules over all things, both in heaven and in earth, and in all deep places. I reverently adore and heartily love the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. Those words which are terrible to the ungodly are sweet to him who knows the love of God—“I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” We can trust our God with unlimited power, and with the right to do whatever He wills, and it is a part of our worship that we should never question whatever He may do. “It is the Lord; let Him do what seems Him good.”

Still, when you praise God for the wonders He has worked for you, and for others, let the climax of your praise be this; that “*His mercy endures forever*.” Magnify with all your faculties of mind and heart; with memory, and hope, and fear, and every emotion of which you are capable, the changeless mercy of God. He is always merciful, or full of mercy. He always will be so. You have a God of immutable goodness; rejoice in Him at all times, and under all aspects. When you think upon His terrible justice, doubt not His mercy. Pharaoh is cast into the Red Sea, but Jehovah’s mercy endures. He slays mighty kings, but “His mercy endures forever.” Yes, when you see hell engulf the impenitent, and you think with solemn awe of the dread punishment necessary to sin, rest assured that this alters not the fact that God is love, and that “His mercy endures forever.” There must be no collision in your thoughts between His justice and His mercy; they are both divine and they both endure forever. Do you say “Hallelujah!” even when you see His wrath. Accepting His mercy in Jesus, praise Him; resting in that mercy, praise Him; hoping in that mercy, that it will follow you all the days of your life, praise Him. By and by, brothers and sisters, we shall know more of His eternal mercy, and then we shall praise Him in loftier strains. Shall we ever need a sweeter song than this—“To Him who alone does great wonders: for His mercy endures forever”? As we shall hear the harpers harping with their harps, and see the holy ones casting their crowns before Him on the glassy sea, shall we not chant this *great Hallel*—“To Him who alone does great wonders: for His mercy endures forever”? The Lord bless you ever! Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—PSALM 136.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—136 (SONG 1), 117, 136 (SONG 2).

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